GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:605
ANSWERED ON:27.04.2016
Safety of Indians Working Abroad
Adityanath Shri Yogi;Bhatt Smt.Ranjanben;Boianapalli Shri Vinod Kumar;Thakur Shri Anurag Singh;Venugopal Shri K. C.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise details of Indians working abroad and the details of Indians stranded/trapped in various strife torn countries and those hit by disasters, country-wise;
(b) the steps taken to assist such Indians including the number of rescue missions undertaken during the last three years and the current year along with the number of people saved through such operations, country-wise;
(c) the schemes formulated for their rehabilitation and to address their grievances; and
(d) the action taken by the Government to ensure safety of Indians working in foreign countries, especially in the conflict zones of the Middle East?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) As per information available, there are an estimated 11.4 million Indian nationals abroad which include workers, businessmen and professionals etc. State-wise data in this regard is not available.

(b) to (d) The Government of India regularly and closely monitors the evolving security situation in the Middle East, including in Iraq, Libya and Yemen, which had substantial Indian communities. The safety and security of our nationals in these countries is a matter of foremost concern. Government has established 24x7 help line functional in the Indian Missions/Posts in these countries.
The Government has made extensive efforts to enable the evacuation of Indian nationals from war-affected countries, as per details given below:

Our Embassy in Baghdad has facilitated the return of over 7,000 Indian nationals to India till date, by providing them assistance with travel documents, immigration and departure facilities and air tickets. The Government had setup special camp offices in Erbil, Najaf, Karbala and Basra, to facilitate efficient evacuation. We had established 24 hour helplines to assist our nationals in Iraq and their concerned family members in India. The Mission is in close and regular contact with the Iraqi Government to ensure the safety and security of the remaining Indian nationals in Iraq. A group of 39 Indian nationals working in a construction company in Mosul continues to he held captive by ISIS. The Government is making every effort to secure their release.

3,771 Indians have been evacuated from Libya so far. These evacuations were facilitated through land, air and sea, with the assistance of countries neighbouring Libya. An estimated 1650 Indians still remain in Libya. We keep a close watch on the situation in Libya and our Mission continues to make efforts to persuade the remaining Indian nationals to return to India.

The Government conducted Operation 'Raahat' in March-April 2015 for the evacuation of Indian nationals from Yemen. Under this operation, we evacuated 6,710 persons from Yemen, including 4,748 Indians and 1962 foreign nationals. The Hon'ble External Affairs Minister regularly reviewed the arrangements made in this regard and the Minister of State went personally to Djibouti to supervise evacuation operations. We established a 24 hour control room and helplines in our Embassy in SanaÃ¡ and a camp office at Djibouti. We also received the help of Indian Railways and the concerned State Governments to provide hospitality and transport for Indians arriving from Yemen in Mumbai and Kochi, all the way up to their home towns.

In Nepal, within six hours of the 25 April 2015 earthquake Indian military aircraft, helicopters, commercial flights, cargo trucks and trains carried relief material and rescue teams to Nepal. Indian teams rescued nearly 6500 persons, evacuated 3975 Indian nationals and provided medical aid to over 4700 persons.

The Government continues to keep a close watch on development in strife-torn countries, issue advisories whenever required and engage the authorities in these countries to enable safe evacuation of India nationals.